[P 198-H]

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Plate 10. Future members of the household line up with the branches of spring bushes with which the curer will brush them. Photograph by Marcey Jacobson.

71 Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

577 in the following statement by a man who admitted to me that he had 682 killed two men:

The padre said that those who kill will get killed. The one who kills also receives all the guilt of his victim and will have to pay for it in the after-world. But my father said that when he was a policeman, there was a man in Tejonero who killed for nothing when he got drunk. He always carried a knife and would kill anyone around. However, he lived until he was very old. Therefore I do not believe the padre.

577 775 Concern about the afterworld does not act as a deterrent to action in this world.

783 794 Most men ignore the priest's attempts to persuade them to go to confession. Women, especially the prayer-reciters, confess and take communion. Their confessions, according to the priest, are a recitation of the sins of their husbands or their neighbors.

293 577 Drinking is often given as a defense for failing to meet standards of behavior. While this serves to excuse minor infractions, a man is supposed to be responsible for his actions even when drunk. When one policeman started a fight in public, an elder judge commented to my informant:

Look at that, younger brother! I drink liquor when I am very drunk, but I do not fight either my elders or minors. When I passed as president formerly, I used to enter the cabildo, and I spoke well to the judges even if I was drunk. One time I came to your house very drunk and you were half drunk, but you did not say anything to me, nor did I. You did not fight. Thus I walk well. I never fight, nor have I gone to prison, and it is because I give respect to my elders and to my juniors.

Reflecting on this advice, my informant added:

And so it is with me also. I have drunk a great deal in Ahk'olnantik [the opposite section from where he lives] both at day and at night. Whoever speaks to me tells me to go drink with them a little liquor, and sometimes I give them a drink or I take them where they sell liquor and we drink. But I never fight, and I am able to drink wherever I like.

626 273 431 The community has developed techniques for compensating failure to meet behavioral norms. The most frequently used is an offering of the

because sickness is considered a supernatural expression of disturbed social relations, and this is considered disruptive, not only for the people who inhabit a single dwelling, but also for the building which symbolizes their common residence and interests. As long as the relations of people living in a house are harmonious, the house is kept contented. But if this is not so, both the people and the building have to be ritually cleaned. For example, if a daughter disobeys her mother, she is considered to be suffering from bilis or cólico, and in need of curing. During the curing ceremony, the sick misbehaver has to be instructed about her duties as a good daughter, and is given a speech apropos the misdemeanor. The curing ceremony is not completed if the house is not ritually cured, too. This is done by a curer offering the building some trago, the local brew, asking it to be contented. This offering is then symbolic of both the re-establishment of normal social relations between the individuals living in the house, and between the individuals and their material projection, their house.

The people living in a household are in charge of performing some other rituals which are expected to insure the welfare of the whole group.

A small altar, usually made of a pine table, is kept in the house. It is covered with Catholic Saints' images and printed religious calendars. The table also contains all kinds of other things: petty cash (which is kept there for small purchases), double corncobs (which are "lucky pieces") or unusually colored maize, and any other oddity found by the household members, such